

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-15 remain pending after amendment.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 9, 11 and 12 are amended to state that "polymer fibers are positioned between at least some **peripherally** adjacent metallic filaments such that at least some polymer fibers are not totally surrounded by metallic filaments whereby gaps are formed between at least some laterally adjacent metallic filaments after the polymer fibers are softened or melted under vulcanization conditions". Support for this amendment exists at least at the Figures 1A-C and 2A-C, and the accompanying description of same in the specification. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants' note that the Examiner suggests to applicants that the claims would be placed in condition for allowance if the claims were amended to replace "laterally" with "peripherally". By this amendment, the independent claims are amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner. All pending claims should now be found to be allowable.

Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11 and 14 under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11 and 14 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Starinshak in view of Nakamura WO 85/02210. This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

In response, the claims are amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner. The claims are now believed to be in condition for allowance and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15 under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Starinshak in view of Nakamura and Kobayashi. This rejection respectfully is traversed to the extent deemed to apply to the claims as amended.

In response, the claims are amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner. The claims are now believed to be in condition for allowance and the rejection should be withdrawn.

The application is now believed to be in condition for allowance and an early indication of same is earnestly solicited.

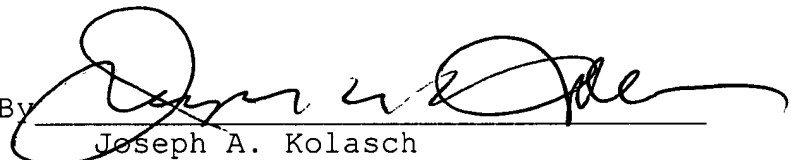
In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, Applicants request that the Examiner contact James W. Hellwege (Reg. No. 28,808) at (703) 205-8000 to discuss such matters.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Very truly yours,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By



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JAK/JWH/sh

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